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## The Borderland of Fear: Vincennes, Prophetstown, and the Invasion of the Miami Homeland

George Ironstrack  
*Miami University, Ohio*

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In the end, it seems churlish to quibble about definitions in such a comprehensive volume. Better to sit back and take it all in. In future decades, the *Dictionary of Middle Western Literature* is likely to play the same authoritative role in regional literary definition as the earlier anthologies edited by John T. Frederick (*Out of the Midwest* in 1944) and John T. Flanagan (*America Is West* in 1945) did for the regionalist literary flowering of the Great Depression. The Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature can be proud of the herculean effort that produced this comprehensive survey of regional literature. They set out to demonstrate that the Midwest is neither homogeneous nor static nor culturally backward. With *Dimensions of the Midwestern Literary Imagination*, they have undoubtedly succeeded.

*The Borderland of Fear: Vincennes, Prophetstown, and the Invasion of the Miami Homeland*, by Patrick Bottiger. Borderlands and Transcultural Studies Series. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016. xix, 244 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, notes, bibliography, index. \$50.00 hardcover.

Reviewer George Ironstack is assistant director/program director of the Education and Outreach Office at the Myaamia Center, Miami University (Ohio). His research has focused on the history of the Miami Indians.

In a quickly paced and engaging narrative history, Patrick Bottiger lays out his case for “pervasive lying among Indian, French, and American communities” in the early eighteenth century. Bottiger focuses on what he identifies as widespread falsehoods about the village of Prophetstown within the “Miami-American borderland” of the Wabash River valley in what later became the state of Indiana (8, 12). The village, which existed from 1808 to 1813, was led by the Shawnee Prophet Tenskwatawa and inhabited by members of multiple tribal communities who shared his vision of a Pan-Indian nativist revitalization movement.

Bottiger begins his narrative by outlining what he calls the “longue durée of Miami history” and attempts to assume the perspective of Miami Indian people prior to the creation of Prophetstown. By the 1800s, Bottiger argues, American aggression had transformed this Miami homeland into a Miami-American borderland (8). In that space, Miami Indians, French fur traders, and American settlers often focused on the needs of their villages and towns over the interests of their respective nations (5, 113). Violence in this period arose not out of intercommunal hostility but instead out of intracommunal competition among factions seeking control of their respective towns and villages. The narrative of these intracommunal disputes spins off the four battles of Tippecanoe: the conflict of words to “determine the intentions of the Prophet’s community at

Tippecanoe" (1808–1811); the actual Battle of Tippecanoe on November 7, 1811; the immediate aftermath of the battle in which "local factions used the fight to their advantage"; and, finally, the decades-long struggle across the nineteenth century to "rework" the memory of the battle in order to explain and excuse the regional changes that followed the War of 1812 (136–37).

It is within this arena of intracommunal factional conflicts centered around Prophetstown that Bottiger highlights the endemic lying that he identifies as obscuring the true intentions of the residents of that village. Those lies led all of the residents of the Wabash River valley down the road to war. Bottiger argues that it was in the interests of one faction of the Americans, led by William Henry Harrison, and one faction of the Miami, led by Little Turtle, to lie about the militancy of the movement led by the Shawnee brothers Tenskwatawa and Tecumseh. For Harrison, this lie was used against tribal leaders—like the Miami leader Pacanne, who resisted land cession treaties—to paint them with the same "militant" brush. The lie was also used against Harrison's American opponents in Vincennes, especially against those who perceived Harrison as a proslavery elitist. For Little Turtle, those lies were an attempt to secure his influence over the Miami Nation as a whole, over his nation's relationship with the Americans, and over the economic and social changes engendered by the large-scale cession of Miami lands between 1795 and 1809. Given the centrality of the analysis of the factional division between Little Turtle and Pacanne, it is unfortunate that Bottiger fails to note that the two men were kin. They each shared one parent in common with the important female Miami leader Tahkamwa.

"In the end," Bottiger concludes, "Euroamericans laid claim to an American borderland and secured their sovereignty not simply by occupying space but by lying together with the Miamis about their past" (179). Unfortunately, Bottiger's analysis of the Miami Indian culture and politics of the early 1800s suffers from a lack of depth. He ascribes false meanings and folk etymologies to words like *minjipi* (*miincipi*/maize) and *Sahg-wah-se-pe* (*saakiweesiipi*/Saint Joseph River). He also struggles to capture the diversity of Miami-speaking communities in the early 1800s and to accurately represent the underlying village-centered economy that sustained these diverse villages prior to the treaty period (16, 87). Additionally, the top-down focus on a few male leaders obscures the lack of a singular or even dual Miami community that could give a voice to a focused set of political policies or coordinate a series of false statements made with the intent to deceive.

For those working with the histories of indigenous nations, Bottiger leaves some challenging questions unanswered. How do we go about

separating rumors, exaggerations, and honest misunderstandings from lies? And what is the value of talking to contemporary indigenous community leaders and scholars about the reliability of the historical record? Indigenous scholars have unique perspectives and knowledge about their histories, ancestors, languages, and homelands, as well as about the archival record and secondary literature. Collaborative engagement between indigenous and nonindigenous scholars can only enrich our collective understanding of the past.

*Free Spirits: Spiritualism, Republicanism, and Radicalism in the Civil War Era*, by Mark A. Lause. Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2016. viii, 223 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$95 hardcover, \$30 paperback.

Reviewer Mark S. Schantz is professor of history at Birmingham-Southern College. He is the author of *Awaiting the Heavenly Country: The Civil War and America's Culture of Death* (2008).

Spiritualists in nineteenth-century America were more than a fringe group of sketchy characters obsessed with mysterious rappings on floor boards and the exciting lure of communicating with the dead around the séance table. Mark A. Lause argues that spiritualists numbered as many as 5 to 6 million Americans when the Civil War broke out and not only could be found in New England but also maintained a strong presence in the Midwest, from Michigan to Wisconsin and Iowa (14). Students of Iowa's history will be particularly interested to learn that spiritualists there included Chief Justice Joseph Williams of the Iowa Supreme Court and that they published their own newspaper, the *Rising Tide* (33, 50–51). More broadly, Lause contends that spiritualists pushed a robust earthly agenda, including support for abolitionism, women's rights, free love, Fourierism, and the protection of Native American rights. Key in this agenda of individual freedom was support for the Republican Party, particularly in its most radical expressions. Indeed, Lause counts the spiritualists as among the Republicans' most ardent supporters. "Spiritualism," he writes, "exploded onto the scene simultaneously with a mass Republican Party and in the same regions" (43). For Lause, the emergence of the Republican Party and the rise of the spiritualist movement in America are inextricably intertwined.

The cornerstone of Lause's contention that spiritualism and Republicanism formed part of the same intellectual current is his treatment of Abraham Lincoln. His chapter on Lincoln demonstrates beyond doubt that the president was more than a dabbler in the spiritual arts; he made multiple personal connections with those in the spiritualist community.